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ABSTRACT

The San Francisco-based YMCA Youth Chance began in 1978 as a Youth Community Conservation and Improvement "sweat program"--a means of providing unemployed high school dropouts with CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act)-funded jobs. Youth Chance continues to train males and females, 16-19 years of age, who meet CETA requirements. However, it also offers a comprehensive program in both worksite training and classroom education for which it maintains its own private high school. The educational component, now funded entirely by grants from Zellerbach Family Fund and San Francisco Foundation, is considered largely responsible for the program's success. It influences students' employability, academic goals, self image, and skills levels. While involved in the program, youth (1) work four hours per day, four days per week, at a site in their area of training; (2) attend classes four days a week for two hours; and (3) meet with counselors and participate in a job search. Crucial factors in program success, as indicated by high overall placement of youth who have failed consistently elsewhere, include comprehensiveness of program design, staff cooperation, individual attention for each participant, and a high caliber teacher staff. Reviews of four other San Francisco youth programs are appended to provide a range of approaches to youth employment which may be compared to methods and objectives of Youth Chance. (YLB)

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YOUTH CHANCE

A Program of the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Employment and Training

An Evaluative Report Prepared for The San Francisco Foundation and The Zellerbach Family Fund

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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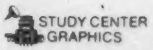

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COVER PHOTO by Malcolm Thompson. The scene is a Youth Chance work site at Buena Vista Park and the Youth Chance workers are planting flowers as part of a landscaping project.

SUMMARY ABSTRACT

Youth Chance, a San Francisco-based youth program in operation since March of 1978, is sponsored by the YMCA and funded primarily by the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, with supplementary funding from the Zellerbach Family Fund and the San Francisco Foundation. One of two youth programs in San Francisco designated as a Title IV-A Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Program (YCCIP), Y Chance technically falls into the category of a "sweat program"—that is, one which aims to get youth off the streets by involving them in community work projects. In its current form, however, Youth Chance does not fall within the strict definition of a sweat program. Like many other such programs, it has approached the escalating problem of youth employment as a complicated interrelation of factors that cannot be dispensed with simply by means of hard work.

Early in the program's operation, Zellerbach Family Fund and San Francisco Foundation provided Youth Chance with the funding necessary to develop an in-house educational component—supplementary to the regular CETA program—which would be explicitly linked to employment training. In February of 1979, this educational component was granted private school status by the state Department of Education. The people working in Youth Chance and the funding agencies both have suggested that the private school, with its unique relation to the employment training aspect of the program, is in large part responsible for the program's success.

A number of factors distinguish Youth Chance from other programs of its sort, including:

- The type of client it serves.
- The comprehensiveness of its design.
- The cooperation among Youth Chance staff members, including teachers, administrators, and work supervisors.
- The individualized attention each student gets.
- The high caliber of the teaching staff.

In evaluating a program like Youth Chance, it is important to keep in mind that statistics about placement rates do not fully measure program success. The benefits of this program include greater self-esteem, increased self-awareness, greater interest in education, and the likelihood that at some point in the future the program graduates will be able to get and keep a job. These benefits do not necessarily show up in the short term, and some of them can never be measured quantitatively; yet in the long run they represent the primary objectives that any youth employment and training program must seek to accomplish.

MAY 9 1980

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INTRODUCTION

Youth Chance, a San Francisco-based youth program in operation since March of 1978, is sponsored by the YMCA and funded primarily by the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, with supplementary funding from Zellerbach Family Fund and San Francisco Foundation. One of the two youth programs in San Francisco designated as a Title IV-A Youth Community Conservation and Improvement Program (YCCIP), Youth Chance technically falls into the category of a "sweat program"—that is, one which aims to get youths off the street by involving them in community work projects. The benefits of such a program include generating income for the youth participants, all of whom must, according to CETA guidelines, come from low-income families; furnishing free labor to community agencies (salaries and administrative costs of the program are paid through CETA); and providing youth who may never have held jobs in the past with an on-going work experience. The long-range goal of such a program, like others funded through CETA, is to improve the overall "employability" of these youth and thereby increase the chance of their obtaining unsubsidized employment in the future.

In its current form, however, Youth Chance does not fall within the strict definitions of a sweat program. Like many other such programs, it has approached the escalating problem of youth employment as a complicated interrelation of factors that cannot be dispensed with simply by hard work. Recognizing this, Youth Chance has attempted to link the overall goal of improving youth employability to a set of more concrete objectives that focus on such factors as the importance of improving basic reading and math skills; of providing specific job skills as well as actual work experience; of developing the personal and professional habits necessary to see an undertaking through from start to finish; and, finally, of raising self-esteem. As will be discussed in more detail below, this comprehensive approach is very much in line with nationwide thought regarding the necessary components of a successful youth employment and training program.

Early in the program's operation, Zellerbach Family Fund and San Francisco Foundation provided Youth Chance with the funding necessary to develop an in-house educational component—supple-

mentary to the regular CETA program—which would be explicitly linked to employment training. In February 1979, this educational component was granted private school status by the state Department of Education, making it possible for Youth Chance to award diplomas and provide transferable credit. These developments launched a unique experiment in the area of youth employment and

'After a year and a half of operation, the Youth Chance program can claim marked success in relation to both the original placement goals and the placement records of other comparable programs in San Francisco'

training programs. The primary intention of this report, then, is to determine how well this experiment has fared.

After a year and a half of operation, the Youth Chance program can claim marked success in relation to both the original placement goals and the placement records of other comparable programs in San Francisco. To better assess the short- and long-term benefits provided by this program, this report will attempt to go beyond the CETA statistics to a more concrete evaluation of how and why the program works. This evaluation will include a detailed discussion of the program's design and implementation, the methods by which success is defined and measured within the program, the ways in which the program has been successful in motivating so-called "problem" youth, and the kind of youth the program serves best. Throughout this discussion, special attention will be paid to the role of the educational component in achieving the overall goals of the program, as well as to what distinguishes Youth Chance from other youth employment and training programs in San Francisco and across the nation. To place this discussion in a meaningful context, the evaluation of Youth Chance will be preceded by a brief discussion of national issues in the area of youth employment. For purposes of comparison, descriptions of four other youth employment and training programs currently operating in San Francisco have been included in an appendix.

A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

According to many, the problem of youth unemployment is among the most critical issues facing the nation. Recent estimates suggest that nearly two million American teenagers—approximately one-fifth of the labor force between the ages of 15 and 19—are unemployed.* (These figures are probably conservative because of the methodological problems inherent in collecting unemployment statistics.) Although the crisis affects all segments of the population either directly or indirectly, the brunt of the problem is borne by the minority community, particularly blacks. Thus while the unemployment rate for *all* youth during 1978 averaged about 17.5 percent, official estimates of unemployment among black youth are more than twice that, at about 41%. (The figures for Hispanic youth are also high, at about 22%.) Moreover, the National Urban League claims that the

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*All figures and quotations regarding youth employment are taken from the summary report of the Vice President's Task Force on Youth Employment, Youth: The Challenge of the 80's. The papers that appeared in this report were delivered at a conference in Oakland, California, August 1-3, 1979. Where appropriate, specific page references will appear in the text.

actual figures are much higher, reaching 50% or more. In the words of the Vocational Foundation: "For minority youth, these are the years of a great depression, far worse in its impact on youth than any depression which the country as a whole has ever encountered." (p. 74)

It is striking to note that this "great depression" is worse in the United States than in any of eight other leading industrial countries. A comparison of average unemployment rates for teenagers during 1974-76 indicates that the United States, at 18.3%, had three times or more the teenage unemployment rate of Sweden, West Germany, Britain and Japan. Even Italy, with its relatively depressed economy, shows a teenage unemployment rate roughly three percentage points below that of the United States. Figures such as these indicate a national crisis of grave proportions. The short- and long-term effects of this situation are well-documented. As one expert puts it:

> *There is ample youth joblessness to account for high American crime rates in general and for soaring ghetto crime rates especially. The United States has throughout the last 20 years been failing to connect youth with the job market. Despite the economic advances and civil rights gains of the 1960s, and despite the "Great Society" and "War on Poverty" efforts and the range of current CETA programs, the United States has, year after year, shown a steadily declining record of providing jobs for inner city youths. (p. 79)*

To allow a pattern of joblessness to develop and inevitably perpetuate itself among a large proportion of American teenagers is to initiate a process that is damaging to the individuals involved and increasingly expensive for society. Since statistics clearly indicate that jobless youth are likely to become jobless adults, and because the result of unemployment is so often either crime or state dependency, the price of youth unemployment grows incrementally with time.

In line with these concerns is the fact that youth unemployment, increasingly concentrated in the economically depressed areas of a significant number of American cities, has emerged as both a product and a cause—albeit one among many—of the socioeconomic deterioration of major urban centers throughout the United States. The devastating effects of this deterioration are most apparent in such economically crucial centers as New York, Washington, Detroit, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Significant for

the purposes of this discussion is the fact that the San Francisco-Oakland metropolitan area has been classified as one of the "14 leading disaster cities for general unemployment and especially youth unemployment in the United States." (p. 85) What is particularly discouraging is the fact that, in the words of one expert: "After ten years of manpower planning and program operation and the expenditure of billions of dollars, the net result is that the problem of youth unemployment is more severe now than ever before." (p. 105)

In 1977, responding to the worsening situation, Congress added to existing CETA legislation in an effort to attack the problems of

'Both San Francisco YCCIP programs have developed extremely innovative approaches to dealing with the problem of youth unemployment'

youth unemployment directly. This new Title III legislation, christened Youth Employment Development Program Act (YEDPA), funded the Youth Employment and Training Program (YETP) and the Youth Community Conservation Improvement Program (YCCIP), and modified existing provisions in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP/SPEDY). Funding also was set aside for demonstration projects. Then in the fall of 1978, youth programs were grouped under Title IV of the CETA legislation. Although the YETP and YCCIP provisions remain intact, the entire body of youth legislation is currently under close scrutiny pending its expiration in 1980, as those who shape policy seek to determine what approaches to youth employment have been most successful. The central difficulty in posing such a question, however, lies in trying to measure long-range benefits using short-range indicators. As facts and figures take center stage, the need for qualitative evaluation of programs becomes increasingly apparent. Although it is impossible to analyze all programs in depth, efforts are being made to cull those elements of existing youth programs that promise some solution to a complicated set of problems. Fortunately, there is substantial consensus about what these elements are.

According to the American Vocational Association (AVA), six

factors contribute most dramatically to the problem of youth unemployment: "lack of basic skills, employability skills, job skills, and experience; government and educational policies; and the availability of jobs." (p. 42) Attacking this problem is clearly not a simple or short-term undertaking, but involves re-evaluating such complex institutions as school, family, and government, as well as a concern for a whole set of social, psychological, and economic issues that cannot be easily monitored or controlled. As one expert puts it: "We have found through experience that a job alone is not enough to take disadvantaged kids from a point well outside of the mainstream of the labor force and involve them directly in the mainstream. It takes remedial education, skill training, counseling, and in some cases, extensive supportive services." (p. 7) Although the emphasis shifts somewhat, this constellation of needs reappears throughout the literature. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis put on education, which is seen as a crucial element in the formula, both because of the importance of basic literacy to finding and holding a job and because educational success is intimately tied to the more elusive project of building self-esteem and habits of social cooperation. Another repeated theme throughout the literature is that youth employment programs must not simply be in the business of "getting kids off the street" by providing them with short-term work, but must instead be concerned with cultivating a set of attitudes that make having and keeping a job possible. Thus one person observes: "Whatever the exact curriculum or mix of program elements, the most common goal of youth programs is not occupational skill acquisition, but rather that combination of attributes called "job readiness." (p.36)

Clearly, there are a wide variety of workable approaches to achieving this goal of job readiness. The appendix to this report documents the methods used by four Title IV-A youth employment programs currently operating in San Francisco; one of these four is the only program in the city *other* than Youth Chance that is funded through YCCIP. As discussed above, YCCIP is technically limited to generating "sweat programs," with a very small proportion of the budget allocated to administrative costs. Despite these limitations, both San Francisco YCCIP programs have developed extremely innovative approaches to dealing with the problem of youth unemployment. In the following section, this report will look in detail at the ways in which the Youth Chance program has fostered job readiness in a population that is not served adequately by more traditional institutions.

THE YOUTH CHANCE PROGRAM

Like the other local YCCIP program, Asian Neighborhood Design, Youth Chance trains males and females between 16 and 19 years of age who live in San Francisco, who are unemployed, and who otherwise meet the CETA requirements regarding family size and annual income. Unlike AND—and unlike any other youth program now operating in San Francisco—Youth Chance offers a comprehensive program in *both* worksite training *and* classroom education, for which it maintains its own private high school. The educational component of Youth Chance, which accounts for approximately 10% of the program cost, is now funded entirely through grants from Zellerbach Family Fund and San Francisco Foundation.

The staff of Youth Chance and its funding agencies suggest that the private school, with its unique relation to the employment training aspect of the program, is in large part responsible for the program's success. Many of the administrators, work supervisors, teachers, students, and union representatives involved in the program label the educational component "essential" and "vital" to the program. Perhaps the most surprising thing about the Youth Chance program—aside, that is, from its notable success in providing job-training for young people—is the virtual unanimity with which staff, students, and sponsors agree on their definitions of program intentions and program benefits.

Program Intentions and Overview of Structure

According to Youth Chance Director Eugene Pulley, the project began as a "sweat program:" a means of getting unemployed high school dropouts off the streets for four hours a day by providing them with CETA-funded jobs. This intention coincided with the guidelines

implicit in YCCIP funding, which allocates 65% of the project money to youth salaries and leaves only 35% to cover materials, supervision, and other costs, with a maximum of 5% for administration. The idea behind such a funding structure is that the participants will learn by doing rather than by being taught. In line with this aim, Youth Chance focused on occupations such as carpentry, painting, and landscaping—jobs that require a minimum of classroom skills, as compared to plumbing or electrical work, for instance. To obtain cooperation from the appropriate unions, and to avoid competing with existing training programs, Youth Chance established ties from the beginning

'Youth Chance established ties from the beginning with the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council'

with the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council, which in turn promised to absorb a certain portion of the Youth Chance graduates into its own apprenticeship programs.

The educational component, added after Youth Chance had started, was a response to an unanticipated need. Program staff soon discovered that the high school dropouts who enrolled in Youth Chance frequently lacked the basic academic and survival skills necessary to obtain employment and maintain themselves on the job. Through a series of developments (described in a later section), the Youth Chance High School evolved into what it is today.

From its inception, the educational component was intended to coordinate classroom learning with on-the-job training. Originally, the director envisioned that the classroom instruction would be based heavily on the kinds of knowledge required for carpentry, painting, and horticulture; but a number of factors—including the low percentage of students who finally went into the trades and the need to avoid duplicating union training—combined to make a broader-based program more desirable. Yet the classroom work is still essentially linked to the on-site employment, and has amplified the extent to which Youth Chance is able to provide employment training to its participants. Participants and staff uanimously agree that the *current* intentions of the Youth Chance program are to provide both work training and educational training: the on-site

experience necessary to understand the demands of employment, and the basic skills (up to and sometimes including a high school diploma) necessary to obtain a job and do it well.

The youth who enroll in Youth Chance spend four hours a day, four days a week, working at a site in their particular area of training. In the past, these areas have included carpentry, painting, and landscaping; this year carpentry was dropped because of the high per-person cost it entailed as well as the scarcity of placement possibilities in that field. The worksite "employers" consist mainly of non-profit community organizations that have to pay for materials but get the Y-Chance labor at no cost. Examples of work performed by Y-Chance crews include:

- Construction of a playground at Lucinda Weeks Center;
- Painting offices, gym, and recreational space at Earl Paltenghi Youth Center;
- Painting seven rooms of a Victorian building in Japantown, to be used as a community facility;
- Interior renovation of a large meeting room at The Farm;
- Raised bed construction, soil preparation, and planting vegetable gardens at Bret Harte School.

According to Pulley, since the Y-Chance program began in March 1978, it has provided about $600,000 in free work to community agencies, completing more than 80 projects. Y-Chance participants are paid $3.50 to $4.25 per hour. They work under the supervision of a trained supervisor (one for each job area) and a number of appointed crew chiefs (consisting of exemplary students in the program), but the work itself involves a substantial amount of independence.

When they are not working, many of the students attend classes four days a week for two hours at a time. This time is unpaid, but for those who lack basic skills, school attendance is required if they want to be eligible for work. Outside of job hours, Y-Chance participants also meet with their counselors (who double as an Administrative Assistant, an Educational Coordinator, a Job Developer, and an Intake Coordinator) and participate in a job search. On Fridays, they attend job development workshops, listen to guest speakers, go on field trips, and attend monthly evaluation meetings.

Each Youth Chance cycle lasts six to nine months. The program is now in its third cycle; the first extended from March 1978 to November 1978, and the second from January 1979 to September

1979. Not all students start at the same time, and some are held over into the next cycle. Thus far, the program has served about 265 youth (119 in the first cycle, 86 in the second, and 60 in the third, counting carryovers), of which about 124 were enrolled in the classroom component. The current program budget, from October 1979 to March 1980, is $212,916; this does not include the educational program, which will cost $25,676 for the same period.

The Educational Component

Everybody connected with Youth Chance seems to agree on the importance of the private high school. "'Vital' is the only adjective that I can think of," said Pulley, the program director, commenting on the role of the educational component. The union representative from the Building Trades Council said:

> *Y-Chance had to do with education, which was why I was willing to get involved . . . A pre-apprenticeship program isn't technically necessary, but it doesn't hurt, because kids coming into our apprenticeship programs these days can't read and write. The union has started a tutoring class, but we still need something more extensive.*

And a Youth Chance student who had successfully completed one cycle of work remarked that the teachers were what made the program succeed for him.

According to the director, the educational aspect was an afterthought tacked onto the Youth Chance program. He had originally intended to farm the students out (as Asian Neighborhood Design and other comparable programs do), letting them gain their academic knowledge through existing schools and through programs such as the Apprenticeship Opportunity Foundation. But he didn't like the lack of control and supervision this method entailed, so in June 1978 he hired San Francisco Educational Services to conduct the first 20-week session of in-house classes. After this period with SFES, the educational program was made entirely the responsibility of the three Y-Chance teachers and the educational coordinator—in part to reduce costs, and in part to give Youth Chance greater control over the classroom training.

Largely in response to comments from the first group of

students, the classroom component has changed somewhat in the past three cycles. At first the classes met 90 minutes at a time, three days a week. A tutorial program with no ability to award credit, the classroom training attracted only moderate attendance levels (52%), perhaps because students received no remuneration for the hours in class.

In the second cycle, school was extended to two hours a day, four days a week. The number of students enrolled in classes jumped from 31 to 57 (at the same time as overall Y-Chance enrollments dropped), and attendance increased to 74% in

'The close attention Y-Chance students get from their teachers, along with the way in which their education is coordinated with their work, is largely responsible for the high success rate of the program'

response to a strengthening of the regulations governing tardiness and absence. Moreover, in February 1979 the tutoring program became a high school after a Private School Affidavit was filed with the California Board of Education. This enables Youth Chance to award credits for classroom work and on-site training and to grant high school diplomas, adding further incentive for students to work on their academic skills. The school is not yet accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, but it intends to seek accreditation if funds become available for that purpose.

The Youth Chance High School, now in its third cycle, serves 36 students with a teaching staff of three. Since each teacher conducts two classes a day, this ensures a 6-to-1 student/teacher ratio, which is optimal for the kind of individualized training Youth Chance provides. Classrooms are rented from a private agency, Youth for Service, the space converted to classrooms by Y-Chance students who did the construction and painting themselves. In addition to their classroom education Y-Chance students also use Mission Reading Lab and other nearby educational facilities and materials.

Upon entering the employment training program, every Youth

Chance participant takes the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to determine his or her level of proficiency. Students who need classroom instruction are then placed according to their skill levels in one of three classes: Remedial (below 5th grade reading level), Intermediate (between 5th and 7th grade level) and Advanced (above 7th grade). Some students test out of the education component entirely, but a high school diploma alone does not guarantee exemption. After taking the TABE, students meet individually with the educational coordinator and with their teacher to plan an appropriate course of study. Those within

'For most of the students, Youth Chance represented the first time anyone had taken a comprehensive view of their lives, and attempted to coordinate their in-school and out-of-school activities'

reach of high school graduation can choose between aiming for a diploma or trying to pass high school equivalency tests (General Educational Development Exam or California High School Proficiency Exam). The curriculum for each student will vary depending on skill levels and individual interests, but in general it includes reading (using specially designed readers, vocabulary workbooks, SRA kits, mimeographs, and other materials), mathematics (with emphasis on functional math skills, especially those that pertain to the students' work), and some selection from social studies (including U.S. history, sociology, social psychology, consumer economics, and political science) and science (including health, safety, biology, chemistry, and physics). In addition, each student receives training in survival skills—how to use want ads, how to read the newspaper, how to use the telephone, how to follow directions, how to fill out job applications.

The close attention that Y-Chance students get from their teachers, along with the way in which their education is coordinated with their work, is largely responsible for the high success rate of the program. The educational component influences the students' *employability, academic goals, self-image,* and their *skill levels* (as

revealed by test scores, for instance).

Employability. The program director, other administrative staff, the supervisors, and the union representative all emphasized the need for education as a stepping-stone to employment. Not only does the high school teach skills necessary to obtain work (such as reading directions or using fractions), it also teaches the self-discipline necessary to hold a job. For the first time, many of these students actively work to master a skill—an experience they will then be able to apply outside the academic setting. In addition, frequent cooperation between the school setting and the work setting

'For many of its students, Youth Chance made education seem accessible and palatable for the first time in years'

produces instructive and applicable activities for the students. For instance, one student who had already passed the GED but was still working in the landscaping unit used the educational component to study more advanced math and to read independently about horticulture. Similarly, the landscape supervisor frequently gives work activities that require the students to read articles or write plans, and often lectures his work unit on the importance of education to employment. Cooperation between the educational and work components of Youth Chance is facilitated by informal contacts between the supervisors and the teachers as well as by twice-monthly staff meetings at which they discussed overall program issues and the individual problems of various students. For most of the students, Youth Chance represented the first time anyone had taken a comprehensive view of their lives and attempted to coordinate their in-school and out-of-school activities.

Academic goals. Several students from each cycle who did not get a full-time job on completion of the program elected to return to public school. In general, this marked their own ability to conquer their previous aversion to education. In 1978, one student passed the GED; in 1979, two passed the GED and two passed the California High School Proficiency Exam. Fourteen others received high school diplomas at the Youth Chance graduation ceremony in August 1979. Several Youth Chance graduates plan to go on to community college

or night-school courses. One student who had dropped out of high school for two years has now graduated with a diploma from Youth Chance and intends to go to either business college or electronics school. In this respect, the educational component does more than prepare its students to do the jobs in the work component; by enabling them to get high school diplomas, it also increases their employment potential and their potential to get further education if they should so desire. For many of its students, Youth Chance made education seem accessible and palatable for the first time in years.

Self-image. Obviously, as students succeed in increasing their

'Youth Chance is able to help its participants get jobs or go back to school because it enables them to alter their self-image'

employability and meeting their academic goals, they begin to feel more self-confident. And it works the other way too: Youth Chance is able to help its participants get jobs or go back to school *because* it enables them to alter their self-image. The close attention and honest criticism they get from their teachers help the students see themselves more clearly and make them feel more worthy of attention. A work situation creates some of this feeling, but teachers have a far more intimate relationship with their students and are better able than supervisors to attend to individual needs. As a result, they are likely to have a greater impact on personality and self-image. One student, for instance, now acknowledges that he was "loud" and "hyper" when he came into the program, but through the comments of his teachers, which caused him to step back and criticize himself, he was able to work consciously on calming down. In a large public-school classroom such self-awareness would have been to no avail; his "loudness" would simply have branded him a troublemaker.

Skill levels. Recent test results indicate that in one educational cycle the Youth Chance students improved an average of 11 months in terms of grade level—nine months in reading, and 13 months in mathematics. (The greater improvement in mathematics can be attributed to several factors: low entry-level skills in that field, more chance to practice math exercises on the worksite, and the prevelance

among Y-Chance students of learning disabilities that inhibit reading.) When the classroom time at Youth Chance is compared to time spent at the public schools, Y-Chance students are improving nearly one full grade level in one-fifth of a normal school year—and at a cost of only about $700 per student. Set against the test scores from public schools (where such students rarely if ever improve one grade level in one year) and the costs of standard private schools (the only other places where such a low student/teacher ratio exists), these figures represent remarkable success.

Definitions of Program Success

A striking fact about the Youth Chance program is the degree of unanimity among program staff about what constitutes success for participants. Everybody listed several definitions—from getting a job to developing a better self-image—but they all agreed that success had to be defined according to the individual student.

The most objective measure of success is, of course, the number of students who succeed in getting jobs when they finish the program. In the first Youth Chance cycle, 51 of the 119 participants were placed in unsubsidized employment, school, or another CETA program; all of these are described as "positive terminations." The

'Y-Chance students are improving nearly one full grade level in one-fifth of a normal school year—and at a cost of only about $700 per student'

second cycle, with 86 participants, had 22 positive terminations, of which 18 were unsubsidized employment. Since 75% of Youth Chance participants are drop-outs and 80% have never held a job before, this placement rate is quite high; in fact, it is 100% higher than the rate originally projected by Youth Chance. MOFT follow-up statistics on Youth Chance participants indicate that their ability to keep these jobs is comparable to that of graduates from other successful programs such as AND; and employers such as Dendron Incorporated and Zellerbach Paper Co[illegible]y confirm that Youth Chance graduates are good employees—enthusiastic about working,

well able to handle the job skills demanded of them, and, when the job is in their field of training, better-trained than other entry-level workers.

Youth Chance administrators, teachers, and supervisors stressed that *any* job counted as success, not just a job in the student's field of training, because the program is intended not so much as career training in a particular skill area, but as general preparation for "job readiness." Several staff members felt that one important effect of Y Chance was to develop habits of discipline and order in students who had previously led undisciplined lives. If the participants

'Employers such as Dendron Inc. and Zellerbach Paper Co. confirm that Youth Chance graduates are good employees'

learned to get up on time, to get to work every day, and to call in when they were unavoidably detained, Youth Chance had been successful in at least one significant respect.

Another obvious area of success involved educational progress. Whether or not students obtained a job immediately, the fact that they had passed the GED, gained credits toward a high school diploma, or even improved their math and reading scores increased their chances of eventually finding employment. Not ony teachers, but work supervisors as well, stressed the importance of academic success.

Still another area of success involved the "survival" skills students acquired in the program. If they could read the want ads, take responsibility for their daily needs, and deal with adults in a way that allowed them to receive help, Youth Chance participants had learned something from the program. Through the intensive job search at the end of each cycle—in which each participant had to visit two potential employers every day—and through the on-going counseling in preparing a job application and having an interview, the participants acquired specific employment-seeking skills that would help them in the future.

Basic to all of these successes—and highlighted by every staff member interviewed—was a change in attitude on the part of the students. This kind of success was acknowledged by the students as

well: They felt that Youth Chance enabled them to perceive themselves more clearly and thus to gain more control over their lives. For many, the program gave them a sense of hope; for others, it gave a sense of structure; for all, the ability to view themselves in a new way was central to their success in the program. The Youth Chance director discussed his definition of success with words such as "self-awareness," "maturity," and "social ability." The teachers defined a successful participant as "a kid who leaves the program and feels better about himself."

But whatever the definition of success, Youth Chance staff acknowledged that the expectations for achievement had to fit the individual student. Measures of success were dependent on where each student started.

Who Benefits From Youth Chance

A major factor distinguishing the Y-Chance program from other CETA-funded programs, such as AND and the University of San Francisco's office training project, is the type of youth it serves. The other programs reject applicants because they have insufficient academic skills or inadequate professional potential (see Appendix for details of their selection criteria), but Youth Chance takes the people who have always been on the bottom of the pile. According to the program intake coordinator, the major requirement for getting into Youth Chance is being serious about working and learning. A

'Youth Chance takes the people who have always been on the bottom of the pile'

potential participant who shows enough interest to arrive at the intake interview on time is already well on the way to admission. Testing devices such as the TABE, which might be used elsewhere for screening, are used here only to place participants in the appropriate classroom.

The type of youth participating in Y-Chance has changed somewhat during the past two years. Initially, most of the participants were referred by organizations like the California Youth Authority. Many were ex-offenders, and the participants tended to be at the lower end of the 16-to-19-year age bracket. By the second cycle, however,

word of the program spread and the range of applicants was broadened. The racial breakdown of second-cycle participants is indicative of the range of youth reached by the program: 41% were Black, 35% Spanish-surname, 14% Asian, 8% Caucasian, and 1% Native American. Currently, Youth Chance gets referrals from a large number of agencies, including MOET, Youth for Service, Apprenticeship Opportunity Foundation, American Indian Center, Mission Hiring Hall, and San Francisco Unified School District. While a significant number of ex-offenders—about 15% of the participants—continue to be involved in the program, the participants in the second and third cycles were predominantly 18- and 19-year-olds.

'It is these chronic failures—the ones who have not been able to fit into a larger institutional setting—that Y-Chance serves best'

Youth Chance staff members generally agree that the older participants are more likely to succeed in the program. The prime requirement for success appears to be the participant's sense that this is his last chance and a willingness to make that chance work. Older youths who have tried and failed in the job market are more likely to feel this way. They are also more likely to have the individual initiative—the sense of responsibility about their own lives—that is necessary to success, and they are more prone to welcome the discipline that gives structure to their lives.

Twenty-five percent of Youth Chance participants are female, and it is generally agreed that they do as well in the program as men. The director remarked that they do better, the job developer commented that they were easier to place, and the landscape supervisor mentioned that they were harder workers. On the other hand, the three teachers and the educational coordinator (all women) pointed out that because of discrimination against women in the building trades, women were less able to apply their Youth Chance training to a construction job. But since obtaining jobs in the building trades is only a small part of the program's definitions of success, this is a relatively minor problem. Teachers also indicated that the women

are more likely to drop out of the program because they have childcare responsibilities or become pregnant, a problem that undoubtedly deserves attention.

For youth of both sexes, Y-Chance is a program that pays attention to people who have previously failed at school and work. It is these chronic failures—the ones who have not been able to fit into a larger institutional setting—that Y-Chance serves best. The question that remains is *how* the Youth Chance program manages to motivate its participants when other means have failed to do so.

Motivation

Part of the reason Y-Chance works for these "last-chance" youth is precisely because it *is* their last chance. By admitting participants who have been rejected or ignored elsewhere, the program demonstrates its faith in them and creates expectations for their success.

One of the crucial factors behind Youth Chance's success is the degree of individual attention that each participant gets, and this is particularly true in the educational component. Upon admission to the Y-Chance High School, the young person meets with the educational coordinator to plan a program in detail. They discuss why the public schools weren't conducive to success, and the student usually comments on the overcrowded classrooms. At Y-

'With this kind of comprehensive supervision, it is very hard for a student to lose interest or drop out suddenly and inexplicably'

Chance, students attend classes in groups no larger than six students per teacher; in addition, they have frequent opportunities to talk with their teachers and counselors alone. While the work supervisors also make themselves accessible, they do not deal with the students in such small groups and they do not monitor progress quite as carefully; hence, the educational component is essential in maintaining this sense of close contact. One Y-Chance student pointed out, "Here you can talk to the teachers because there are fewer kids. In a public school, you sure don't get to know the teacher—unless you're the one kid who does."

Part of the quality of the educational component can be credited to the small class size, but part is also due to the high caliber of the teaching staff. "They've got some dynamite teachers," one recent graduate commented. "Other teachers try to ram things down your throat, but these teachers are smart." The same student was also pleased that the three teachers represented a mix in terms of ethnic and racial background. The teachers' accessibility makes them popular with the students; their training and experience—in remedial education, in working with troubled youth, and in constructing

'We let them know that they have to act like adults—otherwise they'll be fired'

individualized programs—make them effective as instructors. Because the Youth Chance program is relatively small, it can be selective about the three faculty members it hires. The students' allegiance to their teachers, and their willingness to work hard to meet teacher expectations, are evidence that this kind of selectivity pays off in terms of student motivation.

Of course, one cannot discount the role of salaries in motivating Youth Chance participants. The fact that they are paid a decent wage for the four hours they work each day is a strong incentive to stay in the program. On the other hand, they are *not* paid for the hours they spend in class, as the USF program participants are; the only financial motive for attending class is that it is a prerequisite for the work component. Furthermore, Y-Chance actually pays lower hourly wages than comparable programs such as AND, yet it still manages to retain a high proportion of the initial participants in each cycle.

An additional motivating factor for both work and school is the degree of coordination between them. Youth Chance shows its participants that education is necessary for employment, and it makes education more immediate by tying it to job-related skills. Moreover, because work supervisors, teachers, and counselors meet frequently to discuss individual students, they have an overview of a student's entire situation, which helps them understand what might be preventing the student from working well at any given time. With this kind of comprehensive supervision, it is very hard for a student to lose interest or drop out suddenly and inexplicably.

A final motivating factor is the extent to which Youth Chance imposes and enforces clear, stringent rules. "There's nothing innovative about our approach to motivation," said the director. "We're just making people do all the old things: they have to come on time, they can't be high . . . We let them know that they have to act like adults—otherwise they'll be fired." Since absenteeism was a big problem at the beginning, program staff worked out a strict list of rules, which they present to the participants at the beginning of each cycle. Each participant is allowed to be absent or tardy without an excuse a certain number of times; after that, they are placed on probation and then terminated if the problem doesn't disappear. This open admissions/tight regulations policy means that participants are really given a chance to prove their seriousness and are excluded only after repeated failures. Because the director handles most of the enforcement, teachers and supervisors reported that they now have very little trouble with absenteeism.

CONCLUSIONS

Data from fiscal year 1979, compiled by San Francisco's CETA prime sponsor, indicate that the overall placement rate for the two YCCIP programs is 41%. When taken out of context this rate may not seem very high, but it in fact represents a placement rate significantly higher than that projected by the two programs—211% in the case of AND and 152% for Youth Chance. The function of this report is not to evaluate AND, though the description given in the Appendix should indicate that this is indeed a successful and worthwhile program. But in regard to Youth Chance—the focus of this report—it is important to view the placement figures in the context of this program's unique aims and accomplishments.

One of the crucial factors distinguishing Youth Chance from many other employment training programs is *the type of client it serves*. Y-Chance has proven especially successful for youth who have failed consistently elsewhere. Unlike AND, Morrisania's Clerical Training Program, and USF's Office Skills program, which have comparatively stringent selection requirements, Youth Chance accepts students who lack the most basic academic and job-readiness skills. The primary requirement for admission to Youth Chance is demonstrable interest in learning and working.

The other striking feature of Youth Chance is *the comprehensiveness of its design*. Y-Chance runs *both* an on-site work experience project that provides skills training *and* a private high school that offers academic training leading to a diploma. These two components are linked through the curriculum as well as through cooperation between the work supervisors and the teachers. This comprehensiveness enables Y-Chance to serve and motivate students whose low skill levels would bar them from many other programs. The youth

training programs discussed in this report offer a variety of skills-training, work experience, and educational services, but none except Youth Chance integrates these services into one program. In addition, Youth Chance is the only program that runs its own private high school and hence is able to award diplomas.

What makes the comprehensive program possible is *the cooperation among Youth Chance staff members.* As described earlier, the staff members meet together formally twice each month and informally throughout the week. The administrative staff (including the educational coordinator, job developer, administrative assistant, and intake

'The benefits of this program include greater self-esteem, increased self-awareness, greater interest in education, and the likelihood that at some point the program graduates will be able to get and keep a job'

coordinator) also function as the students' counselors. In addition, the director personally oversees all aspects of the program. This close cooperation, by giving every Y-Chance staff member an overview of the students' progress, ensures program accountability.

An important feature of Y-Chance, especially in the educational component, is *the individualized attention that each student gets.* Class sizes at Youth Chance High School are extremely small, with the student/teacher ratio never exceeding 6 to 1. Moreover, each student pursues an individually planned program based on specific needs and aptitudes.

Another factor in the educational component's success is *the high caliber of the teaching staff.* It is clear from student comments, the director's evaluation, and classroom observation that all the teachers have the technical skills needed to teach remedial courses, as well as familiarity with the special problems of educationally disadvantaged students. Undoubtedly, this program is able to attract good teachers in part because of the small class sizes and the flexibility it offers in terms of curriculum design. Furthermore, the tangible rewards involved in teaching at Youth Chance include the noticeable progress that the students make in a relatively short period of time.

Granted that education is important to employment training, the question remains why this educational function cannot be performed by the public schools. The fact that so many educational alternatives already exist supports the idea that the schools alone are not enough. One of the points of interest in evaluating the Youth Chance High School was the degree to which these educational methods could be transferred to public institutions. As AND's experience demonstrates, the idea of awarding credit for work training has already been adopted in many public schools. Certain aspects of the Youth Chance curriculum—particularly the consumer education and survival skills elements—could usefully be taught in the public school system. However, the most essential aspects of Youth Chance High School—its small class sizes, its individually tailored programs, and its comprehensive counseling services—could not be duplicated by an urban school district now or in the foreseeable future, given financial constraints.

With the funding provided thus far by YCCIP and private foundations, Youth Chance already has managed to accomplish a great deal. It is crucial for this level of funding to be maintained. In addition, however, an increase in funding would allow the program to develop in new directions, including:

- Expansion of the job areas for which employment training is provided.
- More extensive contacts with private industry in relation to program design as well as job placement.
- More and better resources in terms of instructional and testing materials.
- Formalized home-contact services such as those provided by Youth for Service.
- Systematic follow-up of program graduates above and beyond that currently done by MOET.

Finally, in evaluating a program like Youth Chance, it is important to keep in mind that statistics about placement rates do not fully measure program success. The benefits of this program include greater self-esteem, increased self-awareness, greater interest in education, and the likelihood that at some point in the future the program graduates will be able to get and keep a job. These benefits do not necessarily show up in the short term, and some of them can never be measured quantitatively; yet in the long run they represent the primary objectives that any youth employment and training program must seek to accomplish.

APPENDIX

Four Youth Programs
A Comparison

The four programs described below have been selected for review because they represent a range of approaches to youth employment and so provide a useful context in which to consider the methods and objectives of the Youth Chance program.

Youth For Service

Founded in 1957, Youth For Service (YFS) has been in operation longer by far than any of the other youth programs described in this report. Offering a diverse array of outreach and in-house services, YFS has traditionally received substantial support from the United Way of the Bay Area as well as from various private foundations, individual contributors, corporations, and businesses. Substantial funding is also provided by CETA. Although, in the past, YFS has been extensively involved in job training, and has plans for new skills programs to go into effect in the near future, it is currently focusing its efforts in the areas of basic education, counseling and job search.

The two YFS programs currently funded by CETA include a Remedial Education and Career Exploration program designed for

'Education is seen as crucial because of the importance of basic literacy to finding and holding a job, and because educational success is intimately tied to the more elusive project of building self-esteem and habits of social cooperation'

parolees and ex-offenders aged 16 to 21 who do not have a high school diploma, and a Job Search Program aimed at youths between the ages of 17 and 25 years who already have either a high school diploma or a GED. The services provided in the first of these programs include remedial instruction in English, reading and math as well as in the mechanics of job-hunting. Supplementary information about career opportunities is also central to the program. Major emphasis is placed on providing participants with individualized instruction and counseling. The primary objectives of the program

are to improve the academic skills of students to a point where they may successfully re-enter school or pass the GED, and/or to help them find jobs. In 1978, the program served 80 parolees and ex-offenders, half of whom found either part- or full-time jobs. Thirty-two members of the group improved their academic skills and re-entered school, while the rest moved on to other skills improvement programs. In general, the program tends to serve a higher proportion of males than females, largely because of the nature of available referrals. For instance, in the last fiscal year, 62 of the 72 participants were male.

The Job Search Program (JSP), currently in its fifth year, operates six cycles of 20 to 25 students per cycle. Each six-week cycle is

'Youth for Service is focusing its efforts in the areas of basic education, counseling and job search'

divided into two segments. During the first two weeks, program participants are given classroom instruction in the basic elements of job seeking, including information on how to fill out applications, write resumes, and present themselves well in an interview. Additionally, information is provided concerning appropriate careers and current trends in the labor market. During the remaining four weeks of the cycle, participants are actively involved in an actual job search, assisted by an employment specialist. In addition to being qualified classroom instructors, program staff are trained in counseling and job development, they are also responsible for maintaining contacts in the private and public sectors that may lead to jobs. Of the 147 persons in 1979, 101 were placed in jobs, resulting in a placement rate of approximately 69%. This compares favorably with their projected goals: to serve 141 and place 99. Fifty-seven percent of the participants were female.

In addition to these two CETA programs, Youth For Service also runs a GED preparation class, which uses instructors from the community college district; a community outreach program, called Operation Minerva, which provides academic and support services for high school drop-outs enrolled at the City College of San Francisco; a Family Development Program, which offers family

counseling workshops aimed at teaching parenting skills; and a variety of other community service and seasonal youth employment programs.

Of particular note is the short-term CETA program, christened Project EXCEL, which was run by YFS during the summer of 1979. Funded by MOET, this program provided 35 youths between the ages of 16 and 21 years (5 males and 30 females) with eight weeks of intensified instruction aimed at helping them pass the GED exam or, short of this objective, raising their math and reading skills at least one grade level. The success of the program can be measured by the fact that, whereas it was originally projected the 11 students would pass the GED by the end of the summer, the pass rate ended up being significantly higher, with 24 out of 35 students receiving GED certification. This is particularly impressive because all of the participants were high school drop-outs, and had, in many cases, scored exceedingly low on the pre-GED test administered to all students at the beginning of the program.

The YFS director attributes the program's success to a number of factors, including: small class size (no more than 15 students per instructor); extensive support services, including peer advising and family counseling (instructors and the program coordinator were expected to make regular home visits to encourage families to be supportive of the students' efforts); and a careful screening process, which sought to identify applicants who were highly motivated to pass the GED and were not there simply to pick up the $2.90/hour stipend for time spent in class. Throughout the program, emphasis was placed on helping students conquer their fears of failing. They also were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by being willing to study even when they weren't paid. Extensive tutorial services were made available so that participants were able to receive as much individual attention as possible. On completion of the program, students were successfully placed in a variety of settings and programs, including San Francisco City College, part- and full-time jobs, and other YFS programs such as the unpaid GED preparation class and the Job Search Program described above. In the wake of the overall success of the program, YFS is currently trying to get the funding necessary to run the program year-round. The proposed program would take the form of two 24-week cycles with 25 students per cycle.

One of the largest and best-funded youth programs in San Francisco, Youth for Service has many more resources at its disposal

than the other programs described in this report. While its services do not currently include specific job training programs (consideration is being given to instituting an auto services and office skills program in the near future), primary emphasis has been placed on education, counseling, and the development of skills needed to undertake a successful job search. In the opinion of the director, cultivating job readiness is intimately tied to the question of education, which he believes to be the essential starting point for dealing with a population that is unskilled and severely under-educated. Without basic skills and without a high school diploma, youth are utterly unsuited to compete in the job market.

Morrisania West

Originally sponsored by the U.S. Postal Service as part of the "street academy" movement initiated in 1970, Morrisania West—like Youth for Service—has an extensive history of providing services to disadvantaged youth. In addition to acting as a food stamp distribution point for members of the local community, it currently operates two youth programs: a CETA-funded Clerical Training Program and a Youth Diversion Program, which receives funds from the California Youth Authority, administered through the Mayor's Criminal Justice Council. Although geared for somewhat different populations and focused around different sets of objectives, both programs concentrate heavily on basic education and personal and career counseling.

Now in its third year of operation, the CETA Clerical Training Program provides services to a total of 30 students between the ages of 17 and 21, enrolling 15 students at a time in two six-month cycles. Students participating in the program attend class from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. five days a week taking courses in business English and math as well as in bookkeeping and typing. In addition to this basic course-load, workshops are held once a week on the development of interviewing skills and resume and application preparation. Personal and professional counseling provided by program instructors is also available to all students, as is extra tutoring. Placement of students in jobs and with employment agencies takes place during the last three weeks of each six-month cycle. Currently the staff consists of two instructors—one responsible for teaching classes in math and book-keeping and one for English and typing—and a program coordinator.

To be admitted to the program, students must achieve a 7th grade

academic level on the TABE and be CETA-eligible. In addition, applicants must appear at an interview in which the aim is to define their interest and motivation as well as something about their prior school and work experience. Approximately 75% of those admitted into the program are female, and as is the case in other youth training programs, it is generally felt that women between the ages of 18-21 do better in the program than men or younger students. According to the program coordinator, the program is attracting an increasing number of high school graduates—in part, she thinks, because high school drop-outs often leave school before achieving the 7th grade academic level necessary for entrance into the program. Anyone entering the program without a high school diploma is strongly

'Success in the program is measured by such factors as academic progress, improved family relations, and a decreasing number of arrests among program participants'

urged to work toward the GED, which is considered a necessary pre-requisite to a successful job search.

The basic objectives of the Clerical Training Program are to improve participants' academic skill levels and to place them in jobs requiring clerical training. For the current year, program staff have contracted with the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training to increase student grade levels at least two years and to increase their typing speed by 25 words a minute or to ensure a minimum typing speed of 30 words a minute. Additionally, they have contracted to raise last year's job placement rate from 55 to 70 percent. According to the program coordinator, these goals are in reach.

The other program run by Morrisania West, the Youth Diversion Program, is geared to serve youth between the ages of 14 and 18—a high proportion of whom (60%-65%, according to the director) have already begun to get into trouble with the criminal justice system. Like other AB-90 programs, this program supports the concept that "problem" youth can be handled better through community agencies than through the criminal justice system. Comprehensive in scope, the program provides intensive academic tutoring, personal counseling,

job development and recreation. The overall goal of the program is to get participants back into the school system and/or to help them become productive members of the mainstream community. Although the program has a projected service goal of 75 youths this year, the director claims that the actual number served may be somewhat higher.

As in the majority of the other youth programs described in this report, major emphasis is placed on the educational component of the program. According to the director, fundamental educational problems—such as not being able to read—are often the root cause of a chain of problems manifested by youth entering the program. For those who are not in school, the program offers classes and workshops from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., which provide tutoring in math, reading and social studies as well as individualized diagnostic testing administered every two months. According to the director, the mean gain in reading, spelling and math is 2.5 grade levels in two months. Currently, staff are redesigning the curriculum so that it will both help students prepare for civil service exams and provide them with some academic breadth (including the study of such non-fundamental subjects as social studies and history). Since only a few students in the program are interested in preparing for the GED exams, extra tutoring sessions geared particularly to this goal are provided in the afternoons. Students generally stay in the program seven months before returning to school.

In addition to academic tutoring, the program also offers participants a range of counseling and job development services. Counseling services include personal, group and family counseling, which focuses on the importance of developing confidence and in gaining control over one's life through intelligent decision-making. The job development and training component of the program offers concrete instruction in filling out job applications, writing resumes and interviewing, as well as in the actual job search. In the past, students—many of whom work in the afternoons or the evenings—have been placed in part- and full-time jobs at such places as Liberty House, Payless, and several fast-food chains.

According to the director, the Youth Diversion Program almost never turns anyone away. If a youth has problems that can't be handled within the program, efforts are made to refer him or her elsewhere. In general, the program seeks to recruit young teenagers before they have become established drug dealers or before they have engaged in other hard-core criminal activities that would

entangle them in the criminal justice system. Not restricted by federal regulations, the program currently serves a high percentage of black youth—approximately 80%—because of the high proportion of blacks in the surrounding community as well as Morrisania West's reputation among this population. According to the director, success in the program is measured by such factors as academic progress, improved family relations, and a decreasing number of arrests among program participants.

USF Automated Office Skills Training Program

The primary objective of the USF program, now in its third year of CETA funding, is to provide disadvantaged students between the ages of 18-21 who are not "job-ready" with the technical skills necessary to obtain unsubsidized employment in the secretarial, accounting, and data entry fields. Based on the Common Core Units in Business Education (C-CUBE) distributed by the state Department of Education, the training consists of a pre-programmed curriculum that can be administered by one half-time instructor. The majority of units provide a variety of backup drills for computer terminals. Because job placement is a central component of the program, students are provided with extensive job-development and counseling services in addition to technical skills training.

Run as a series of 12-week cycles (approximately four a year), the program enrolls an average of nine students per cycle. Students in the program attend class from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday and are paid minimum wage, $2.90/hr., for time spent in class (or a flat $30/week if they are on public assistance). Primary emphasis is placed on hands-on experience with computer terminals rather than on straight lecturing. According to the program coordinator, the fact that students have the opportunity to use the terminals from the first or second day of the training is a strong source of motivation. In addition to this technical training, students also receive counseling aimed at helping them identify their interests and skills, describing the kinds of jobs they are likely to get, and advising them how to prepare a resume and how to interview successfully. Videotapes are used to help students monitor their progress in gaining proficiency in this area. To supplement the program, guest lecturers speak on different job areas and issues as well as on the uses of relevant pieces of office equipment.

Unlike many youth employment and training programs funded by CETA, the USF program has a minimum-skills requirement for

entrance. To be admitted into the program, students must demonstrate a 9th grade reading level and a 7th grade math level, as well as familiarity with the typewriter keyboard. This latter requirement is deemed necessary because it is not possible to teach typing in addition to other program skills in 12 weeks. Probably because of the minimum skills requirement, there is often difficulty in finding the number of applicants needed to fill the nine available slots. In addition to high school graduates, the program also serves dropout

'Of those who finish the 12-week modular sequence, 80%-90% are successfully placed in jobs for which they have been trained'

students who have passed the GED, and even a small percentage of students who have briefly attended college. The majority of students in the program are female; it has been difficult to interest males in obtaining quasi-secretarial skills.

Success in the program is broadly defined in terms of course completion. Since 80%-90% of those who finish the 12-week modular sequence are successfully placed in jobs for which they have been trained, finishing the course is tantamount to achieving the program's fundamental objective. This is facilitated by the fact that the C-CUBE units have an 80% pass rate built into them: Although a student might be slower getting through one unit than another, almost everyone who stays in the program succeeds in going through all 18 of the programmed units.

According to the program coordinator, there is a direct correlation between classroom performance and the ease with which a student gets and holds a job upon completion of the program. The main problem among poor performers is not due, she claims, to a lack of technical skills, but rather to a failure of motivation, which may be caused by a variety of factors. The most common reasons for difficulty involve unwed pregnancies, child care and housing problems. One or two women per cycle either get pregnant during the 12-week course or already have children who need to be accounted for. In some cases, the program coordinator noted, motivation problems can be traced to the fact that a student has entered the program entirely for the stipend.

In general, the program is considered to have been more successful than expected. This judgment is based on the high percentage of students who have been placed in jobs during the course of the program operations. Although there is no formalized follow-up beyond that undertaken by the CETA prime sponsor, prior students in the program provide a good deal of informal feedback. Students from as long ago as three years call in to report progress in jobs, to refer other students, to get help revising resumes, or to announce job openings where they work. Also, although there is no built-in contact between the program instructor and work supervisors on the outside, this network is further maintained through companies contacting the program in search of additional graduates.

The continuing high placement rate suggests that the program has been successful in achieving its primary objectives. What is not clear is the extent to which this success is due to the design of the program itself as opposed to such factors as pre-selection among program applicants and high availability of jobs in this area.

Asian Neighborhood Design

Originally conceived of as a community improvement group rather than a youth training program, Asian Neighborhood Design (AND) bears a distinctly different relationship to the issue of youth employment and training from that implicit in either the Y-Chance program or the other programs discussed here. According to the director, the present program is equally committed to two major objectives: 1) providing services that will result in the overall improvement of the community; and 2) providing work experience and training for youths between the ages of 16 and 19. This dual commitment has had significant impact on the design and development of the youth component of the program, affecting such elements as selection procedures, methods of motivating youth trainees, and ways of measuring individual and program success.

Primarily a design company, AND takes on projects which it oversees from beginning to end, providing comprehensive architectural as well as general contracting services. Youths hired by the organization function as members of construction crews working directly with program architects and construction supervisors. (Unlike the situation at Y-Chance, not all of the work undertaken by AND is specifically geared for youth crews.) Because of its status as a design company, AND is able, according to the director, to take on demanding projects which provide youth with a realistic view of work in the

construction trades. Moreover, the work experience is particularly challenging because the youth are able to work closely with professional architects (some of them funded through CETA's Public Service Employment program) on such basic aspects of design and construction as the selection of building materials.

Youths hired by AND are on the job 20 hours a week at a rate of $6/hr., working exclusively in the afternoons. During the mornings they either attend high schools that have work experience programs (such programs offer 10 units of credit for work and schedule classes so that students are out of school by noon) or are enrolled in an

'The work experience is particularly challenging because the youth are able to work closely with professional architects on such basic aspects of design and construction as the selection of building materials'

alternative educational program such as those provided by organizations like Youth for Service, Apprenticeship Opportunities Foundation, or the community colleges. Generally, youths stay in the program for six months.

Unlike other youth training programs described here, AND provides no formalized support services such as personal or job placement counseling. Many of the students, according to the director, continue to receive personal counseling from the agencies from which they were referred. Job counseling and placement occurs informally, largely by means of work supervisors who have had notable success in helping youth from their program get jobs in the construction trades. However, no concerted effort is made to help them get work outside construction. Skills training is provided on the job as needed, while remedial education is strictly geared to the exigencies of the work situation. For instance, in the first week, students are tested on their knowledge of fractions as it applies to using a tape measure. If they are inept, they are given a crash course. In general, the emphasis of the program is on treating the work as a real job and on encouraging students to take full responsibility for

their own performance. Rules of attendance and cooperation are strictly enforced, more so now than they were in the beginning when, according to the director, students were treated more like participants in a "youth program" than like members of a construction crew.

In operation for the past one and a half years, the youth component of AND (funded through YCCIP) has served a total of 57 youths—17 during the first year and 40 in the second. Currently, the staff consists of a program coordinator, a fieldwork assistant, and a union consultant. To maintain a low supervisor/trainee ratio (the break-off point is eight trainees to a construction crew), the program must limit its intake to 20 students at a time. Because admissions are staggered so that new trainees enter every three months, no more than one-half of a construction crew is inexperienced at any time. One of the prime advantages of this system is that trainees who have been in the program for a while can help in training new recruits. Moreover, this staggered cycle also allows for a more extended and comprehensive recruitment effort, a factor that is particularly important in attracting out-of-school youth.

Admissions procedures at AND are selective. According to the coordinator, there are generally 35-40 applicants for up to eight available slots. For the most part, AND does not attempt to serve youth who are at the bottom of the scale or those who need substantial supportive services. Although they may admit a limited number of "problem kids"—ex-offenders or those with personal and family problems—primary emphasis is placed on seeking youths who, in spite of being school drop-outs and so forth, are essentially eager to work and have the capacity to perform well. As part of the admissions requirement, applicants are expected to undergo a 15-minute interview aimed at establishing their motivation and career orientation. In addition, attempts are made to determine their general mechanical ability and manual dexterity.

Although AND originally planned to serve Asian youth exclusively, this policy has been shifted to meet CETA guidelines. (Asian youth are still at some advantage in the program because the majority of AND projects are located in Asian neighborhoods.) The proportion of females in the program is usually 30%-35%, a factor which is at least partially due to the fact that the rate of application among men as to women is 10 to 1. The program coordinator noted that, although few of the women students will probably end up in construction because of the physical limitations involved, generally the women are better and more responsible workers. He also noted that non-

positive terminations among women trainees are usually caused by technicalities, such as moving.

In assessing the overall direction and success of the program, the coordinator stressed the fact that AND had been able to serve many more youths than originally predicted and that the program has had an impressive placement rate. The director reported that 25% of AND's youth trainees have ended up in the construction trades and that significant numbers of the rest have returned to school or found work in a variety of other trades. In more general terms, he noted that success consists of any movement in a positive direction, whether it be in the form of actual employment or the cultivation of attitudes and work habits which might eventually lead to employment. For many, he pointed out, knowledge that they are capable of holding down a job constitutes a substantial success.

What is distinctive about AND, when considered in relation to many other youth employment and training programs, is its emphasis on professional-level experience in construction and its de-emphasis on remedial education and counseling. AND's youth trainees are being hired to perform a job rather than to participate in "a youth program," and they are being paid well for these services. Adequate counseling and educational services, according to the coordinator, are available elsewhere. Unconvinced that an educational program would bear any direct relation to the work, he further questions the capacity of such a program to accomplish what the schools can't, or the advisability of superseding their function. When asked how he would expand the program were additional funding made available, the coordinator said that he would hire additional staff as follows: enough supervisors to reduce the supervisor/trainee ratio to 1:4; a full-time job developer; and a vocational counselor who would work with trainees on how to look for jobs, and how to hold on to them once hired. Again, the emphasis here is on the work situation and the development of strictly professional skills and habits.